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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of

Tohru HIRAYAMA et al.

Serial No. NEW

Filed April 5, 2002

TONED-PAINT ORDER-GIVING AND
ORDER-RECEIVING SYSTEM AND
AGENT'S SERVER COMPUTER
[Corresponding to PCT/JP01/06747
Filed August 6, 2001]

Attn: BOX PCT

Docket No. 2002_0486A

THE COMMISSIONER IS AUTHORIZED
TO CHARGE ANY DEFICIENCY IN THE
FEES FOR THIS PAPER TO DEPOSIT
ACCOUNT NO. 23-0975

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents,
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

Prior to initial examination of the above-identified application, kindly amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly amend the following claims:

3. (Amended) The method **according to claim 1**, characterized by retrieving order backlogs of a plurality of toning persons by a computer system and selecting a toning person out of the retrieval contents in the above step (2).

4. (Amended) The method **according to claim 1**, characterized by opening said toning job to a plurality of toning persons by a computer system, accepting tenders

by said computer system, and selecting a toning person out of said toning persons in accordance with a tender result in the above step (2).

5. (Amended) The method **according to claim 1**, characterized by including (2a) a step of allowing a toning person to estimate an allowable limit of toning by a designated type of paint through the computer toning using a color-matching computation logic about the content of a toning job, transmit the data of an allowable limit of toning by said designated type of paint to a computer terminal of a paint orderer when it is difficult to prepare a toned paint by said toning job, and receive the approval of change to a toning job within said allowable limit of toning from said paint orderer after the above step (2), characterized in that said toning person prepares a toned paint corresponding to said change-approved toning job in the above step (3).

6. (Amended) The method **according to claim 1**, further including:
(5) a step of allowing a painter to prepare a test paint plate by painting the plate with said toned paint supplied by the above step (4), obtain the colorimetric data of the test paint plate, compare the colorimetric data of the test paint plate with a reference color, and determine whether the criterion of the toning end point is satisfied.

8. (Amended) The method **according to claim 6**, characterized in that a computer determines that the criterion of the toning end point is satisfied by comparing the

colorimetric data of a test paint plate with a reference color and then a painter performs full-scale painting.

11. (Amended) The method **according to claim 9**, characterized in that a toning class is further input to said computer terminal in the above step (1).

12. (Amended) The method **according to claim 9**, characterized by retrieving delivery states between toning persons and a paint orderer and the order backlog of the toning person by a computer system, selecting a toning person in accordance with the retrieval content, and giving an order for a toning job to the selected toning person in the above step (2).

13. (Amended) The method **according to claim 9**, characterized by opening a toning job to a plurality of toning persons by a computer system, accepting tenders by the computer system, and selecting a toning person in accordance with a tender result in the above step (2).

14. (Amended) The method **according to claim 9**, characterized by determining whether a measured value of the color of a toned paint plate is present in a color-end-point allowable range when preparing a toned paint and completing toning when the measured value is present in the color-end-point allowable range in step (4).

15. (Amended) The method **according to claim 9**, further including (1a) a step of allowing an agent to estimate an allowable limit of toning by a designated type of paint through the computer toning using a color-matching computation logic about the content of a toning job, transmit the data of the allowable limit of toning by the designated type of paint to a computer terminal of a paint orderer, and accepting the approval of change to a toning job within the allowable limit of toning from the paint orderer after the above step (1); characterized in that said agent selects a toning person and gives an order for said change-approved toning job to the selected toning person.

17. (Amended) The method **according to claim 9**, further including (6) a step of allowing a painter to prepare a test paint plate by test-painting the plate with said toned paint supplied by the above step (5), obtain the colorimetric data of the test paint plate, compares the colorimetric data of the test paint plate with a reference color by a computer, and determine whether the criterion of the toning end point is satisfied.

19. (Amended) The method **according to claim 17**, further including (8) a step of allowing a computer to compare the colorimetric data of a test paint plate with a reference color and determine that the criterion of the toning end point is satisfied and then, allowing a painter to perform full-scale painting.

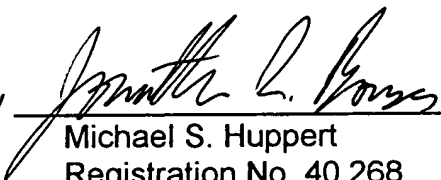
REMARKS

The present Preliminary Amendment is submitted to delete the multiple dependencies of claims 3-6, 8, 11-15, 17 and 19, thereby placing such claims in condition for examination and reducing the required PTO filing fee.

Copies of the amended portion of the claims with changes marked therein is attached and entitled "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

Respectfully submitted,

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